



# WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS

State of Wisconsin  
Department of Workforce Development  
Office of Economic Advisors

## FOR WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

BARRON, CHIPPEWA, CLARK, DUNN, EAU CLAIRE, PEPIN, PIERCE, POLK, ST. CROIX

October 2004

### September sees a smaller labor force with fewer unemployed

Unemployment rates in every county in the West Central region tumbled in September according to estimates released by the Department of Workforce Development. The regional unemployment rate dropped from 4.1 percent in August to 3.8 percent in September and is lower than the 4.3 percent rate of one year ago.

Lower unemployment rates are the result of fewer job seekers in the region. The number of unem-

ployed in the region dropped by 900 in September when the estimate declined from 9,980 to 9,080. While a few may have found a job most of the reduction resulted from summer job seekers returning to school and leaving the labor market.

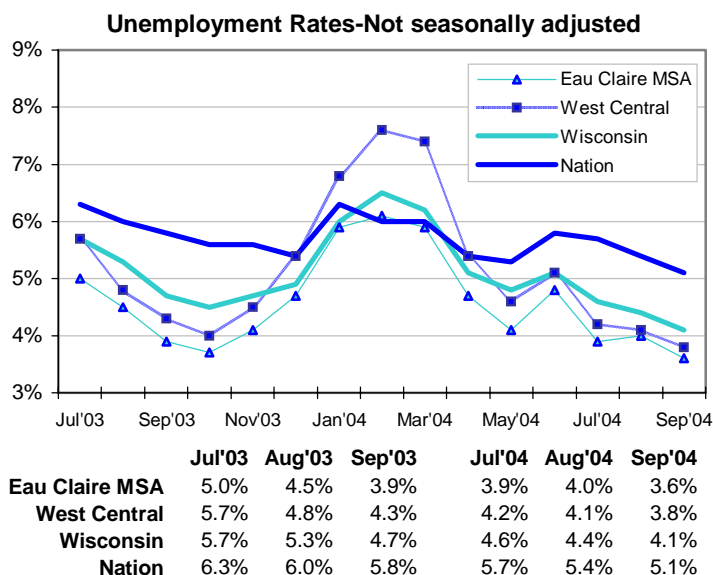
The end of summer jobs also resulted in a decline in the number of residents with jobs in September. Student workers had filled many of these jobs and they

dropped out of the labor market or left the area when the job ended. As a result the number of employed in West Central Wisconsin declined from 231,020 in August to 230,175 in September.

The reduction in employment is a seasonal event that effects most counties in the state. Only six counties statewide reported an increase in employment in September but three, Chippewa, Dunn, and Eau Claire, are in the West Central region. The increase in employment was small and was not the primary factor in lowering unemployment rates.

Unemployment rates declined in 65 of the state's 72 counties when the number of job seekers dropped out of the labor market at the end of summer.

Even though the number of employed increased slightly (120 more employed in a total employment estimate of 85,900) in the Eau Claire-Chippewa metropolitan area it was the loss of 330 job seekers that produced the lower the unemployment rate. The unemployment rate declined from 4.0 percent in August to 3.6 percent in September.



### Civilian Labor Force Estimates\* for West Central Wisconsin counties: September 2004

|              | Barron  |         |         | Chippewa |         |         | Clark   |         |         | Dunn    |         |         | Eau Claire Co. |         |         |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------------|---------|---------|
|              | Sep '04 | Aug '04 | Sep '03 | Sep '04  | Aug '04 | Sep '03 | Sep '04 | Aug '04 | Sep '03 | Sep '04 | Aug '04 | Sep '03 | Sep '04        | Aug '04 | Sep '03 |
| Labor force  | 25,048  | 25,252  | 24,909  | 32,535   | 32,546  | 31,712  | 16,516  | 16,779  | 16,122  | 23,252  | 23,274  | 23,143  | 56,589         | 56,788  | 55,385  |
| Employed     | 23,972  | 24,087  | 23,721  | 31,137   | 31,093  | 30,352  | 15,840  | 16,009  | 15,381  | 22,566  | 22,492  | 22,374  | 54,754         | 54,676  | 53,375  |
| Unemployed   | 1,076   | 1,165   | 1,188   | 1,398    | 1,453   | 1,360   | 676     | 770     | 741     | 686     | 782     | 769     | 1,835          | 2,112   | 2,010   |
| % unemployed | 4.3     | 4.6     | 4.8     | 4.3      | 4.5     | 4.3     | 4.1     | 4.6     | 4.6     | 3.0     | 3.4     | 3.3     | 3.2            | 3.7     | 3.6     |

|              | Pepin   |         |         | Pierce  |         |         | Polk    |         |         | St. Croix |         |         | West Central region |         |         |
|--------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|---------------------|---------|---------|
|              | Sep '04 | Aug '04 | Sep '03 | Sep '04 | Aug '04 | Sep '03 | Sep '04 | Aug '04 | Sep '03 | Sep '04   | Aug '04 | Sep '03 | Sep '04             | Aug '04 | Sep '03 |
| Labor force  | 3,216   | 3,314   | 3,145   | 21,433  | 21,638  | 21,210  | 22,488  | 22,806  | 23,371  | 38,179    | 38,599  | 38,370  | 239,256             | 240,996 | 237,367 |
| Employed     | 3,089   | 3,153   | 3,029   | 20,636  | 20,810  | 20,458  | 21,565  | 21,773  | 22,193  | 36,616    | 36,926  | 36,300  | 230,175             | 231,019 | 227,183 |
| Unemployed   | 127     | 161     | 116     | 797     | 828     | 752     | 923     | 1,033   | 1,178   | 1,563     | 1,673   | 2,070   | 9,081               | 9,977   | 10,184  |
| % unemployed | 3.9     | 4.9     | 3.7     | 3.7     | 3.8     | 3.5     | 4.1     | 4.5     | 5.0     | 4.1       | 4.3     | 5.4     | 3.8                 | 4.1     | 4.3     |

\* not seasonally adjusted

## Industry Employment Estimates for West Central Wisconsin: September 2004

| (Employment in thousands)     | Barron  |         |         | Clark   |         |         | Dunn      |         |         | Pepin          |         |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|---------|----------------|---------|---------|
|                               | Sep '04 | Aug '04 | Sep '03 | Sep '04 | Aug '04 | Sep '03 | Sep '04   | Aug '04 | Sep '03 | Sep '04        | Aug '04 | Sep '03 |
| Total Nonfarm                 | 22.0    | 21.8    | 21.8    | 10.3    | 10.2    | 10.1    | 15.8      | 15.6    | 15.8    | 2.2            | 2.2     | 2.1     |
| Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources    | 0.8     | 0.8     | 0.8     | 0.7     | 0.7     | 0.6     | 0.8       | 0.8     | 0.8     | 0.2            | 0.2     | 0.2     |
| Manufacturing                 | 6.5     | 6.6     | 6.5     | 2.8     | 2.8     | 2.8     | 2.2       | 2.2     | 2.1     | 0.1            | 0.1     | 0.1     |
| Trade                         | 3.4     | 3.5     | 3.4     | 1.4     | 1.4     | 1.4     | 2.8       | 2.7     | 2.7     | 0.5            | 0.5     | 0.5     |
| Transportation & Utilities    | 0.5     | 0.4     | 0.5     | 0.5     | 0.4     | 0.4     | 1.7       | 1.7     | 1.8     | 0.1            | 0.1     | 0.1     |
| Financial Activities          | 0.6     | 0.6     | 0.6     | 0.3     | 0.3     | 0.3     | 0.5       | 0.5     | 0.5     | 0.1            | 0.1     | 0.1     |
| Education & Health Services   | 2.2     | 2.2     | 2.2     | 1.0     | 1.0     | 1.0     | 1.6       | 1.6     | 1.4     | 0.3            | 0.3     | 0.3     |
| Leisure & Hospitality         | 1.8     | 1.9     | 1.8     | 0.9     | 0.9     | 0.8     | 1.6       | 1.6     | 1.6     | 0.3            | 0.3     | 0.2     |
| Info/Prof. & Bus.Serv./Other  | 1.7     | 1.7     | 1.7     | 0.8     | 0.8     | 0.7     | 1.3       | 1.3     | 1.3     | 0.2            | 0.2     | 0.2     |
| Total Government              | 4.5     | 4.1     | 4.3     | 2.1     | 1.9     | 2.0     | 3.4       | 3.2     | 3.6     | 0.4            | 0.4     | 0.5     |
|                               | Pierce  |         |         | Polk    |         |         | St. Croix |         |         | Eau Claire MSA |         |         |
|                               | Sep '04 | Aug '04 | Sep '03 | Sep '04 | Aug '04 | Sep '03 | Sep '04   | Aug '04 | Sep '03 | Sep '04        | Aug '04 | Sep '03 |
| Total Nonfarm                 | 10.5    | 9.7     | 9.6     | 14.2    | 14.1    | 14.7    | 27.8      | 27.8    | 27.4    | 79.4           | 78.3    | 77.7    |
| Const/Min'g/Nat. Resources    | 0.6     | 0.7     | 0.5     | 0.7     | 0.8     | 0.8     | 2.0       | 2.0     | 1.8     | 3.8            | 3.9     | 3.5     |
| Manufacturing                 | 1.1     | 1.1     | 1.1     | 3.5     | 3.5     | 3.7     | 5.4       | 5.5     | 5.8     | 11.4           | 11.5    | 11.0    |
| Trade                         | 0.6     | 0.6     | 0.8     | 2.2     | 2.2     | 2.2     | 4.4       | 4.5     | 4.3     | 12.7           | 12.5    | 12.8    |
| Transportation & Utilities    | 0.4     | 0.4     | 0.4     | 0.3     | 0.3     | 0.3     | 1.1       | 1.1     | 1.1     | 2.9            | 2.8     | 2.8     |
| Financial Activities          | 0.4     | 0.4     | 0.4     | 0.5     | 0.5     | 0.5     | 1.2       | 1.2     | 1.1     | 3.7            | 3.7     | 3.7     |
| Education & Health Services   | 1.2     | 1.1     | 1.1     | 2.0     | 2.0     | 1.9     | 2.8       | 2.9     | 2.8     | 12.8           | 12.7    | 12.5    |
| Leisure & Hospitality         | 1.3     | 1.4     | 1.3     | 1.1     | 1.1     | 1.3     | 3.5       | 3.7     | 3.4     | 7.7            | 8.2     | 7.8     |
| Information/Prof. & Bus.Serv. | 1.1     | 1.1     | 1.1     | 1.5     | 1.5     | 1.5     | 3.9       | 4.0     | 3.7     | 8.7            | 8.7     | 8.1     |
| Other Services                | NA      | NA      | NA      | NA      | NA      | NA      | NA        | NA      | NA      | 3.9            | 3.9     | 3.8     |
| Total Government              | 3.7     | 2.9     | 2.9     | 2.4     | 2.2     | 2.6     | 3.4       | 3.0     | 3.5     | 11.8           | 10.4    | 11.7    |

Current month preliminary. Estimates based on March 2003 benchmark. Summing from unrounded numbers.

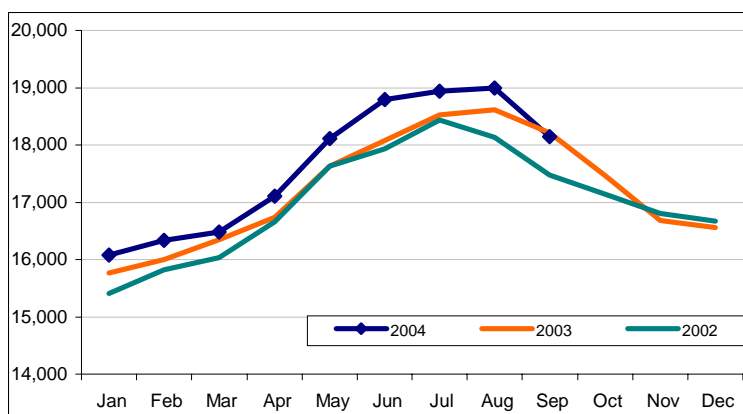
ber, not seasonally adjusted. Both counties were among the few that added jobholders during the month and because that is atypical the seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in the metro area dropped from 4.8 to 4.7 percent. Only four of the state's eleven metropolitan areas reported a decline in seasonally adjusted unemployment rates in September. The Wisconsin seasonally adjusted rate rose from 4.8 to 5.0 percent while the state unadjusted rate dropped from 4.4 to 4.1 percent.

The number of employed declined in September when seasonal jobs ended. Most of those jobs were with employers in the leisure and hospitality industry. There were 500 fewer jobs with leisure and hospitality employers in the Eau Claire metro area while these employers in the rural counties in the region lost 350 jobs. Even though employers in this industry reduced payroll in September

there are still over 18,100 jobs in leisure and hospitality in the region, roughly the same as one year ago.

Employment with manufacturing employers in West Central Wisconsin declined by 300 jobs in September, the second largest reduction in the region. Although generally not considered seasonal employment jobs with manufacturing do follow a seasonal pattern where employers add workers in the spring and reduce payroll in the fall. The reduction this fall of 300 jobs is near the normal trend and if the trend is followed the erosion of production jobs will continue through De-

Leisure & Hospitality Jobs in West Central



cember.

Currently, there are 33,000 manufacturing jobs in the region, of which 11,400 are in the metro area. Metro manufacturing employment is 400 higher than one year ago while jobs in the rural counties have declined by 400 since September 2003. Most of this reduction in manufacturing employment occurred in two counties, Polk and St. Croix.

Find the most current Labor Market Information at: [WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI](http://WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI)

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